

## Wetland Ecosystem

Wetlands provide essential breeding, nesting, feeding, and cover habitat for many species of wildlife, especially migratory birds and amphibians. They also filter and clean the water that will eventually enter streams, rivers and underground aquifers.



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## Name: Raccoon

Scientific Name: *Procyon lotor*

Predators: Raptors, fox

Prey or Food: Eggs, crayfish, berries, garbage

### DID YOU KNOW?

Raccoons will "wash" their hands and food before eating.



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## Name: Muskrat

Scientific Name: *Ondatra zibethicus*

Predators: Raccoons, Fox, Raptors

Prey or Food: Cattails, sedges, crayfish

### DID YOU KNOW?

You can tell a muskrat den from a beaver den because they use only leaves not branches.



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## Name: Western Grebe

Scientific Name: *Aechmophorus occidentalis*

Predators: Raccoons will eat eggs

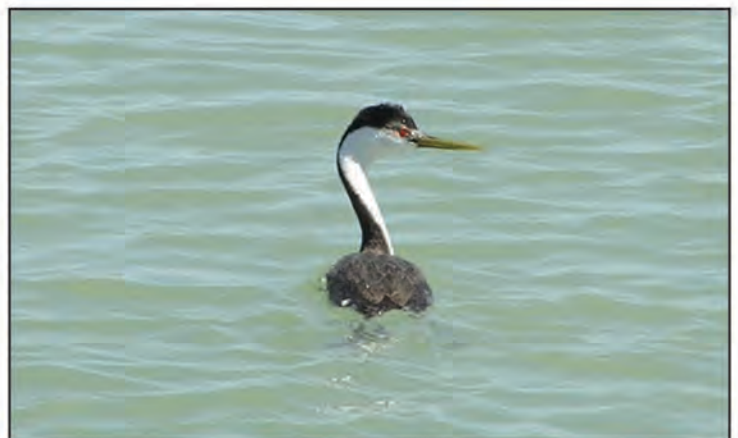
Prey or Food: Fish, aquatic insects

### DID YOU KNOW?

These birds build floating nests.



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## Name: Sandhill Crane

Scientific Name: *Grus canadensis*

Predators: Racoons, raptors

Prey or Food: Grains, insects, frogs

### DID YOU KNOW?

These birds have a beautiful courtship "dance" with leaps, hops, and bowing with wings outstretched.



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## Name: Mallard

Scientific Name: *Anas platyrhynchos*

Predators: Coyotes, humans

Prey or Food: Aquatic plants/algae

### DID YOU KNOW?

Only male mallards have the signature green head, the females are a drab brown.



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## Name: Red-winged Blackbird

Scientific Name: *Agelaius phoeniceus*

Predators: Racoons, snakes, raptors, fox, coyote

Prey or Food: Insects, seeds

### DID YOU KNOW?

These birds are very protective of their nests, they'll chase away much larger birds and other predators.



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## Name: American Avocet

Scientific Name: *Recurvirostra americana*

Predators: Dogs, raptors, raccoons and foxes eat eggs

Prey or Food: Aquatic insects

### DID YOU KNOW?

Avocets use their long up-curved bills to probe mud and shallow water for food.



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## Name: Fathead Minnow

Scientific Name: *Pimephales promelas*

Predators: Fish, snakes, birds, salamanders

Prey or Food: Aquatic insects, algae

### DID YOU KNOW?

This minnows are a great biological control of mosquito larvae.



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## Name: Northern Leopard Frog

Scientific Name: *Rana pipiens*

Predators: Fish, snakes, birds, salamanders

Prey or Food: Insects, small birds, snakes

### DID YOU KNOW?

Much of Wyoming's leopard frog population is suffering from an infectious disease caused by a fungus.



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## Name: Tiger Salamander

Scientific Name: *Ambystoma tigrinum*

Predators: Racoons, turtles, birds

Prey or Food: Aquatic insects

### DID YOU KNOW?

Some tiger salamanders live their entire lives underwater while others live in moist areas above ground.



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## Name: Painted Turtle

Scientific Name: *Chrysemys picta bellii*

Predators: Fox (eggs), raccoon (adults)

Prey or Food: Crayfish, aquatic insects and plants

### DID YOU KNOW?

Painted turtles get their name from their brightly colored carapace, or shell.



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### Name: Blue Darner (larvae)

Scientific Name: Aeshna multicolor  
Predators: Frogs, turtles, snakes, water birds, fish  
Prey or Food: Aquatic insects

#### DID YOU KNOW?

These juvenile dragonflies are voracious predators of water insects.



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### Name: Blue Darner (adult)

Scientific Name: Aeshna multicolor  
Predators: Frogs, turtles, snakes, water birds, fish  
Prey or Food: Mosquitos, flies, gnats

#### DID YOU KNOW?

The adult dragonfly is a voracious predator of other flying insects.



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### Name: Crayfish

Scientific Name: Orconectus spp.  
Predators: Racoons, turtles, birds, fish, frogs, humans  
Prey or Food: Aquatic plants, snails, decomposing matter

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Crayfish, or crawdads, are related to lobsters, shrimp, and crabs.



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### Name: Broadleaf Cattail

Scientific Name: Typha latifolia  
Predators: Muskrat, ducks, geese, birds (seed)  
Prey or Food: Water, sun, soil, air

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Cattails are important hunting perches for many wetland birds.



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Name: Pondweed

Scientific Name: Potamogeton spp.

Predators: Fish, waterfowl, turtles

Prey or Food: Water, sun, soil, air

**DID YOU KNOW?**

In spring, wetlands will be brown from rain and snowmelt, but as summer comes, algae growing in ponds turn waters green.



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Name: Sun

Plants use the sun's energy to grow through a process known as photosynthesis.

Because plants are the beginning of all food chains, all plants and animals transfer the sun's energy when they eat.



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